

(Translation)

Premier Chou En-lai's Extemporaneous Toast  
October 20, 1971

DECLASSIFIED  
PA/HO, Department of State  
E.O. 12958, as amended  
Date: 6/30/05

Dr. Kissinger and friends,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome President Nixon's special envoy Dr. Kissinger and the other American friends who have come to China for this interim visit. The purpose of Dr. Kissinger's present visit is to make preparations related to the political discussions and technical arrangements of President Nixon's visit.

A new chapter will now be opened in the history of the relations between China and the United States after they have been cut off for 22 years, and we should say that the credit for this should go to Chairman Mao Tsetung and President Nixon. Of course, there must be someone serving as a guide, and it was Dr. Kissinger who courageously made a secret visit to China, the so-called "land of mystery". That was quite a remarkable thing. This is now Dr. Kissinger's second visit to a land that should no longer be considered a "mystery". He has come as a friend, and has also brought with him some new friends.

As for me, although I have never been to the United States, I know quite a few American friends, and the United States is not unfamiliar to me. It is evident that the social systems of our two countries are different, and our respective world outlooks -- Dr. Kissinger likes to use the word "Philosophy" -- are totally different, yet this should not prevent us from finding common ground. The Sino-American talks have gone on for 16 years now, but no common ground has yet been found. Now President Nixon will personally come to Peking for discussions, and Dr. Kissinger is his advanceman. We hope these discussions will achieve positive results.

Our two peoples are great peoples. Although our two countries are separated by the vast Pacific Ocean, friendship links our two peoples together. After receiving the U.S. table tennis team this year, we received a number of other American friends. We hope that this new era will be approached in a new spirit.

I propose a toast to the friendship between the great American people and the great Chinese people and to the health of Dr. Kissinger and all our other friends!